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St. Boniface Conference a Success for La Francophonie

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Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages Josée Verner today expressed her high level of satisfaction with the efforts and the outcome of the Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie on conflict prevention and human security, which concluded today in St. Boniface, Manitoba. Participants adopted the St. Boniface Declaration, which focuses on the potential of La Francophonie to prevent and resolve conflicts.

"The St. Boniface Declaration highlights several aspects of conflict prevention and human security and should promote La Francophonie's contribution to the great international debates of the day through a more sustained discussion with other international, multilateral, regional and transnational institutions," stated Minister Verner. The Minister added that the Declaration will be presented to heads of state and government at the 11th Summit of La Francophonie, to be held in Bucharest, Romania, from September 25 to 29, 2006.

"I would particularly like to express my thanks to the Franco-Manitoban community and Manitoba provincial authorities for the warm welcome they extended to all participants. The title of the Declaration itself pays tribute to this part of Canada."

"The Canadian government is proud of this initiative, its participation in this conference and the advances made in St. Boniface," the Minister added. "Canada, along with La Francophonie, has achieved its objectives of promoting La Francophonie's conflict-prevention activities and enhancing La Francophonie's contribution to the international community's debate on human security. It is civil society in all countries of La Francophonie who will benefit."

The Conference, a Canadian initiative, brought together the Secretary-General of the International Organization of La Francophonie, Abdou Diouf, and more than 200 delegates led by foreign affairs ministers of the countries of La Francophonie. Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay led the Canadian delegation.

The International Organization of La Francophonie is made up of 49 member states and participating governments, four associate states and 10 observer states.

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